EAST-WEST DIALOGUE AND THE FUTURE OF RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

(Sri L. D. Swamikannu Pillai Endowment Lectures 1973-74)

by

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EAST-WEST DIALOGUE AND THE FUTURE OF RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

Rev. Fr. IGNATIUS HIRUDAYAM, S. J.

I am thankful to the Syndicate of the Madras University for the honour they have done me by inviting me to deliver for the year 1973-74 the endowent lectures in commemoration of Dewan Bahadur L. D. Swamikkannu Pillai. I propose to talk on East-West Dialogue and the Future of Religion and Philosophy. Though not stipulated in the terms of the endowment the topic of my lectures is suggested by the very name of Dewan Bahadur Swamikannu Pillai. His name conjures up the image of a genius rare to come by, in whom the best in the cultures of East and West blended harmoniously to form an ideal personality which ought to be the beacon light of any university education. He could be Chief Examiner in Greek, Latin, French and German and at the same time delve into Sanskrit and Tamil literature to explain the minute astronomical details scattered in Cilappadikaram and Paripadal. He could take up the challenge of, to him, a tasteless subject like mathematics and so master it as to bring out those colossal monuments, viz. Indian Ephemeris and Indian Chronology etc. At the same time the artist in him could translate books and poems from Latin into marvellously matching English, while the practical man in him could write books on such profane topics as Phonal Shorthand and Secret of Memory, and on the working of the House of Commons etc. What surpassed all these achievements was the fact that the savant and the saint blended in him so marvellously. Though he found God's will in the life of a Grhastha, his books and translations showed the way to many a Catholic young man like me to choose Sannyasa. Indeed the memory of reading his translation of the poem "The prayer of St. Bernard to Jesus Crucified" (Salve latus Salvatoris) touches a tender chord in my heart. Amidst the hectic life of his Collectorship

~~or Chairman~~ of the Legislative Council, or the founding and selling of the Co-operative Movement in Tamilnadu which entailed visiting the villages, it was a great mystic's heart that moved about in the moving tabernacle of his body—a heart that could breathe towards the Heart of the Crucified flames like the following: "When Thou biddest me leave my prison, to my latest prayer listen; O my love of sweet embraces, show Thyself with all Thy graces, on this Thy Cross, O Jesus dear!" And he died as he had prayed. Mahamahopadyaya U. V. Swaminatha Ayyar could vividly recollect in his eighties, before his death, and hold us his hearers in St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai, enthralled by recounting his deep friendship with this Christian gentleman. Indeed it is just one hundred years since he entered the portals of St. Joseph's College and forty nine years since he breathed his last leaving high school youngsters like me wondering what a genius and a saint he had been. Let this brief tribute suffice for the name of the endowment.

Dewan Bahadur Swamikannu Pillai's published works take us to realms not only of science and philosophy but also point to the realms of theology, mysticism and religion in general.

Great men thrive and grow on inter-personal dialogue while small men waste their breath and time in petty polemics and cheap logical victories. Some thirty five years ago, Mahamahopadhyaya Professor S. Kuppuswami Sastri delivered the Rao Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Rao Endowment Lectures (16th & 17th February 1940) on "Compromises in the History of Advaitic Thought". He took his cue from the concluding hymn of the Rig Veda samhita: "Samgacchadhvam samvadadhvam sam vo manamsi janatam: Meet together, converse together and may you apprehend (truth) alike". This Vedic injunction, strangely enough, is the charter of the modern life-need, viz., Dialogue.

Professor Sastri quoted John Moreley (on Compromise pp. 3-5): "The one commanding law is that men should cling to truth and right, if the very heavens fall. In principle this is universally accepted. To the partisans of authority and tradition it is as much a commonplace as to the partisans of the most absolute and unflinching rationalism. Yet in practice all schools alike are forced to admit the necessity of a

measure of accommodation or compromise in the interest of truth itself."

Professor Sastri then proceeded to elaborate how the spirit of compromise was perhaps the most dominating feature of all type of religious and philosophical thinking in the Rig Veda Age. He pointed out the initial vacillation between the thoughts of R. V. I. 164 and those of R. V. X. 129. It is a kind of vacillation which generally precedes accommodations emerging from conflicts of mutually impingent factors. Such factors, for example, are the Original One and the originated many, leading to the concept of the one Absolute Existent as the real ground of being (Adhishthana) of the many namarupa which make up the prapancam and of Maya as the incomprehensible matrix of the world and the later positive Advaitic category of Avidya or Ajnana which is neither existent nor non-existent but sadasadvilakshana-bhavarupahnana. Again in the later Vedic or Upanishadic period the vacillation between the idea of Reality of realities Satyasya Satyam (Brh. Up. II. VII 6) and the idea of the Immortal veiled by reality, Amrtam Satyena Channam (Brh. Up. I. VI 3) led to the invention of vyavaharika-satta and the Paramartika-satta. The vacillation again between the Absolute Incomprehensible Reality known only apophatically by negations, Athata adeso neti neti (Brh. Up. II. III 6) and on the other Vijnanam anandam Brahman (Brh. Up. III. IX 28), Satyam Jnanam anantam (Taitt II. 1) led to the happy formulation of Sat, Chit, Ananda-rupam Brahma. After giving several other examples of such vacillation leading to accommodation in the post-vedic age, he pointed out three striking principles underlying legitimate and useful compromises emerging from the Bhagavadgita (Ch. III, VII 26) viz. paraspara bhavana or giving and taking, loka-sangraha or taking a global outlook and, finally, setting up a standard to be followed by others.

In the second lecture Professor Kuppuswami Sastri elaborated several instances of attempts at accommodation made by the pre-Sankara as well as the post-Sankara advaitic masters and then again quoted John Moreley saying that "a wise suspense in forming opinions, a wiser reserve in expressing them and a wise tardiness in trying to realise them are the three provinces of compromise and that they should be carefully differentiated from unavowed disingenuousness

and self-illusion, from voluntary dissimulation and from indolence and pusillanimity". In addition to these intentional forms of accommodation, Professor Sastri added from Deussen, a fourth which is unintentional accommodation. He also distinguished between what may be called courageous compromise from what may be called timid compromise and ended by quoting Manu's memorable dictum which set the boundaries of compromises, viz. Satyambruyat.

Religions and Philosophies have encountered one another from their very inception and their responses to challenges of such encounters show parallels to the psychological responses of human beings in their mutual encounter showing all the phases of childhood, juvenility, adolescence and adulthood. There is a plethora of literature on such encounters. Studies in comparative religion brought out a wealth of information hitherto unknown about world religions. But written from objective study by men lacking personal commitment, they lacked the insight necessary for a complete appreciation. Books like Dr. Radhakrishnan's "Eastern Religions and Western Thought" flashed the search light on many a doctrine that stands out more defined by such comparisons and contrasts. We can recognize many an unconscious compromise effected by such encounters. The very meaning of history with which Dr. Radhakrishnan begins is perhaps foreign to Indian traditional mode of thought. Yet his book, though it led to East-West dialogue, cannot itself be called a dialogue. Nor can Sardar K. M. Panikkar's publications like "Hinduism and the West" (Sir Jadunath Sarkar Memorial Lectures 1962) be called in any way, dialogue. He however poined out several ideas alien to the general conception of Hinduism which added to the significance of the encounter between East and West e.g. the attitude of social change, the ideas of community and nationalism. These ideas, he pointed out, only posed problems, the successful solution of which was necessary for India to emerge into a progressive world. The doctrine of equality and the spirit of criticism, and a world consciousness, all these required new structures, and methods in education. In the second lecture on "Response", Sardar K. M. Panikkar boldly said that Hinduism having no revealed scripture and no set of unchanging dogmas had no insuperable prejudice against new ideas. He pointed to the defensive response of Brahmosamaj and Arya samaj, the Ramakrishna Movement

and the revival of Vedanta, Rabindranath Tagore and the revival of Vaishnava bhakti, Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy's interpretation of the symbolism of Hindu religion etc. These have prepared the way for a true dialogue between East and West.

Modern dialogue may be said to be a true intercourse in maturity between equals acknowledged and respected as equals and loved with the consequent reverence without being spoilt by any adolescent superiority or inferiority complexes with their attendant problems. Martin Buber to whom we owe the modern meaning of dialogue explained true dialogue as the "mutuality of inner action" (paraspara bhavana?). It is based on the acknowledgment that equals have a right to be listened to and understood correctly before being evaluated or judged; that though we ought to be uncompromising on truth we ought to acknowledge that no one has a monopoly of truth and we do not fully comprehend even the truth we hold and profess. Indeed the question arises: do we possess truth or rather does truth possess us? This leads to a deeper probe into one's own positions and through inner dialogue to perhaps a fresh formulation of the truths. This naturally points to a final meeting point of all searches for truth. But that will be at the eschaton beyond our ken. In Dialogue therefore one first and foremost listens, learns and understands deeply the other's point of view and then one evaluates one's own point of view. We discover areas of agreement rather than fields of contradiction.

In these lectures I intend to enter only three areas of the East-West encounter which I consider will affect most the future of Religion and Philosophy. They are areas of tension but I am convinced that they are areas of creative tension from which both East and West would profit. The first is about our fundamental concept of Being and the doctrine of Creation. The second area is intimately connected with the first and deals with the concepts of time and eternity. Thirdly, I shall skirmish in the area of modern thought, viz. the notions of meaning, of experience and the demands which modern life and the future make on religion and philosophy in the West and in the East.

I. BEING AND CREATION

To Christians struck by the sheer weight of their utter creaturehood the affirmation "Aham Brahmasmi" sounded as diabolic

arrogance and nothing short of original sin. Hindus naturally reacted with equal violencc. By mutual misunderstanding the Indian concept of Being and the Christian dogma of creation appear to be mutually irreconcilable. Even an Indian realist and follower of Madhva Dr. B. N. Krishnamurthi Sarma had this to say: "Madhva is aware that creation as an event occuring at a specific date in the past, at the fiat of the Deity, is open to numerous difficulties and inconsistencies. The awkward question at once arises as to what induced the Deity which kept in its shell all the time, to suddenly take it into its head to come out and call a universe into being." "The objections apply," he continues, "only to creation ex nihilo. No vedantin subscribes to such a view. The hypothesis of Creation in time and the argument to the existence of God from the supposed necessity of a prius to the temporal series are definitely abandoned by Madhva. Creation to him is no doubt a real process. But it is a continuous creation, a constant dependence of the world on the Supreme." With the concluding lines the Christians are a hundred percent in agreement.

But the objection imagines eternity as an indefinite prolongation of temporal existence and seems to imagine God as existing "all the time" before He created the universe. St. Augustine has answered the difficulty long ago: "If there was time, you made it, for time could not pass before you made time. On the other hand, if before heaven and earth were made, there was no time, then what is meant by the question "what were you doing then?" If there was not any time, there was not any 'then!' It is not in time that you are before all time. Otherwise you would not be before all time. You are before all the past by the eminence of your ever present eternity: and you dominate all the future in as much as it is still to be: and once it has come, it will be past: but Thou art always the self-same, and Thy years shall not fail. Your years neither go nor come: but our years come and go that all may come. Your years abide, all in one act of abiding......In you to-day is eternity".

Centuries before St. Augustine, in our own land the Svetasvatara Upanishad had declared:

> "Some sages discourse of inherent nature (sva-bhava)
> Others likewise of time (as the first cause). Deluded men!

It is the greatness of God in the world
By which this Brahma-wheel is caused to revolve—
He by whom this whole world is constantly enveloped
Is intelligent, the author of time,
Possessor of qualities, omniscient.
Ruled over by Him, Karma (i.e. His work = the world) revolves,
This which is regarded as earth, water, fire, air and space
He creates this work, and rests again".

It is in this light therefore we shall interpret the Siddhantin's the Finis is the Principium (அந்தம் ஆதி), because the "Hoc quod continet omnia" is the ultimate fundamentum of all possibilities even of time. Hence the Scholastic thesis reads: "Deus Creavit mundum in tempore vel potius cum tempore" ("God created the world in time or rather with time").

PHILOSOPHY, to be true to its name, must seek and strive after wisdom. Sophia or Wisdom stands for a knowledge that takes in the totality of objects and events and embraces the whole by grasping all its parts with all their inter-relations. This grasp can be obtained only by analysing all the existing things and resolving the entire universe into its ultimate elements. These ultimate elements are supra-sensuous realities or what the schoolmen call metaphysical entities. And hence no philosophy is worth the name if it fights shy of Metaphysics.

The task of Metaphysics is to sift the physical husk of concrete objects which is dealt with by Physics and intuit their essences and the 'Being' of which they participate. The universal essences embedded in concrete objects are rightly called the particular objects of the human mind. But 'Being' in all its latitude is the universal object under which all its knowledge is grasped. "To say that the universal object of the human intellect is 'the whole of universal being' or being in all its latitude means that our knowledge may oscillate between two extremes of being. It may include in its knowledge one extreme, which is prime matter or pure potency; at another extreme, it may include God, which is Pure Act. It may include these extremes because to the idea of being nothing is opposed, not even the idea of nothing, for nothing is intelligible only as a negation of being.

Being therefore is the common object of the intellect, not only because every object conceived in some way falls under its categories, not only because we know a thing on condition that it is a being, but also because the idea of being is the necessary foundation of every operation of the mind". (Fulton J. Sheen. Phil. of Science p. 129)

Svetaketu had spent twelve years studying all the Vedas, but had not peeped into the realm of Metaphysics. And so he had no claim to be called a philosopher. Hence his father undertakes to instruct him in the knowledge of "That through which the unheard of becomes heard, the unthought of becomes thought of, and the unknown becomes known". This is an initiation to that intuition of Being 'secundum quod est ens' (in so far as it is being). "In the beginning, my dear, there was Being only—one, without a second. Some say that, in the beginning, this was Non-Being, only without a second. From that Non-Being sprang Being. But how could it be so, my dear? How could Being be born from Non-Being? In fact this was Being only, in the beginning, one without a second". (Chand. Up VI ii 1-2).

Thus begins the Existentialism of the Upanishads. Gabriel Marcel, in our day, begins by expressing the fundamental ontological need thus : "Being is or should be necessary......I aspire to participate in this being, in this reality—and perhaps this aspiration is already a degree of participation, however rudimentary". The burthen of the instruction which the Upanishadic seer gave was 'Tat-twam-asi, that thou art'. Thou art 'being', sat. It is the intuition into this sat which will make Svetaketu a true phiilosopher. Sat, Being!

But it is rather taxing to the human mind to keep its eye fixed on this analogical and transcendental vastness of the concept of Being, and to recognise and attribute to each thing its proper degree of participation in Being or Sat. No wonder then that in the East as well as in the West the history of philosophy is the story of men and of their schools and systems, periodically missing, finding, forgetting and rediscovering one or other of this omnipenetrant primordial reality called Being or Sat.

The Upanishadic thinkers applied the term Sat in all its varying degrees of significance of reality. All that exists was called Sat.

Hence this world of multiplicity, determination and change can be called Sat. The permanent reality or amrtam which underlies all change is in a special way Sat. As opposed to this permanent reality, the Taittiriya Upanishad II. 6. prefers to call all change by the term tyat. This tyat in so far as it is opposed to Sat was called asat or anrtam. But lesser thinkers were unable to understand that this asat or anrtam could not be understood except in terms of sat, that sat and bhava pervade even asat and abhava in a certian sense. Opposed to this extreme, the Pure Act or Brahman was called Sat par excellence. The word sat can be found scattered in the Upanishads in one or other of these senses. Weaker minds, no wonder, missed this analogical amplitude of the concept of Sat and went each its way in system-building. It was not "the ambiguity of the word Sat", as Dr. Radhakrishnan would have it (Phily of Up. p 68, footnote), but it was indeed the ambivalence, the ineffable richness of this most simple concept of Sat that has taxed the minds of great philosophers, and many have wrecked their systems on this rock.

The fundamental law of the human mind, as we said, demands the transcendent oneness of being. This is the law which true philosophy is called upon to verify in the all-inclusive view (darsana) of a transcendent identity. This is the classical postulate of Western philosophy and as truly of the Upanishadic thought. This is Vedanta. The central problem of Vedantic dialectics is Jagad utpatti, the origin of the world.

Janmadhyasya yatah = That from which are derived birth etc., of this (universe) (is Brahman). This Brahma Sutra I. 1. 2 only repeats Tait. Up. III. 1: "Seek to know that from which all these beings take birth, that by which they live after being born, that towards which they proceed and into which they merge; that is Brahman."

The analysis of the jagad utpatti reveals two main phases: (1) Thesis, sthapana, pratijna and (2) the antithesis, pratisthapana, pratijnavirodha, in the system of creation.

THESIS: The universe has originated neither from non-spiritual nature (Sankara Bhashya II. 2, 1-10), nor from atoms (II. 2, 11-17), nor from inexistence (II. 2, 26-27), nor from individual soul (II. 4, 20),

nor from its own essence. The world cannot be originated but from a "Lord" who is distinguished by such attributes as eternity, purity, intellect (II. 2, 1), liberty (II. 2, 4), self-subsistence, omniscience etc., (I. 1, 1). The term Isvara (Lord) stresses its independence; it is in no way subordinate or coordinated to another first principle (I. 4. 14). The first cause of the world is itself unoriginated as it is "being" of its own nature, mere being (sanmatram) (II. 3. 9). The first cause is adequately self-sufficent (paritrpta) (II. 1. 32). It produces not for the sake of any advantage for itself but for the sheer display of its own nature, lilarupa pravrttir (II. 1. 33).

For the Lord to gain advantage by means of his works is inconceivable. St. Thomas Aquinas puts it pithily: "Deus vult hoc non propter hoc sed hoc esse propter hoc" (God wills this not for the sake of that but this to be for the sake of that). It means He creates not to gain anything for Himself but for the gain of creatures. His causality does not imply any sambandha, relation (II. 2. 38). The first cause must be the absolute total cause of the world (I. 4. 23). There cannot therefore be a pre-existing pradhana like the prakrti of the Samkhyas. Nor can we conceive of any self-subsisting matter (I. 4. 9). The first cause requires no cooperation (asahayam) (II. 1. 25), in the production of the world. The absolute Being is pure spiritual act (caitanya matram) (I. 1. 5). As Saiva Siddhanta would put it, it is அறியும் அறிவு, svayamprakasa. The soul is அறிவிக்க அறியும் அறிவு (received consciousness). The world therefore does not add to the Lord. As St. Thomas put it, Being is not multiplied by creation. We see it is Pure Advaita. The Lord is the author, Kartr, of the world by a free determination, svatantrya pravrtti, of his spiritual will, the abhidhyana-purvika (I. 4. 24).

The idea of production and operative cause (Karana nimitta) stresses the free intelligent agency rather than the agency of a mover. It is the first Motor Immobilis (II. 2. 3). The Sanskrit verb Kartum like the English "to make," the French "Faire" means artificial production of something by transformation, like a work of *art*. But in applying the term to represent the activity of the first cause, the notion of adhisthatr, architect, by being the ground of the being of the effect is introduced. The world derives from no other than him its very substance and being. Hence prakrti is produced by the Lord only

with and *in* the world. In this sense the Lord is the procreative prakrti of the world. Within their conditioning (upadhi) or limit or essence creatures are what God is i.e., being *sat* (II. 1. 6). God is the self-subsisting infinite "To Be"; creatures are participles of that infinitive, of that ontological verb of intellectual substance; being is only their constituent. The world therefore is more than a product, it is indeed a participation of the First Cause. Hence Brahman satyam, Jagat satyam.

But this thesis naturally blossoms into the antithesis, for there seems to be a contradiction between total cause and absolute being.

ANTITHESIS: Now if the product does not subsist by itself and in its own being, and yet must somehow subsist if it exists at all, there is need for a principle, a 'cause' of its subsistence; it subsists by and in some thing else than its own being; it pre-supposes a *susceptive* 'cause' *upadana* or subjective potentiality of its emergence (I. 4. 25) from which it will be produced passively.

But if the First Cause is the total cause of the world, should it not therefore also be its susceptive 'cause?' Should we not therefore say that the world is produced not only by and from but also in the First Cause? Therefore we ought to say that the Lord becomes the world as the clay becomes the pot, the world is a self-evolution, a self-modification (parinama) of Brahman. Advaita emphatically rejects such an inference as a metaphysical absurdity. Brahman consists of pure intelligence, is devoid of any differential characteristic, undetermined, *Caitanya matram*, vilaksana rupantara rahitam nirviseşam brahma (III. 2. 16). It is free from all worldly form, rupadyakara rahitam (III. 2. 14); unevolved (avyakta), unchangeable (Kutastha-nitya), unmodified (avikara). It cannot be at the same time cause and effect (Karmatvam Kartrtvamca). Its absolute simplicity cannot coexist with infinite diversity (nanatva). Saiva Siddhanta however paradoxically says ஏகனும் ஆகி அநேகனும் ஆனவன் நாதனும் ஆனன்...நம்மையே ஆண்டான் (He who is one and at the same time He who is many also is the Lord; He Lords us over). A self-evolution of the first cause is unthinkable. The first cause is absolutely uncaused, sarva vikriya rahitam. We have nothing to add, nothing to subtract from this perfect dialectical 'antithesis' of the system of creation.

Advaita concludes: there is no world since there cannot be such a causation. And life-experience, vyavahara, has ultimately to stultify itself, denying its own reality (apavada). But the denial of causation is not and does not claim to be the solution of the dialectical problem; it is rather an elegant escape from the clearly perceived absurdity of the magical immanentist universe of an esoteric tradition, by simply rejectlng the problem: This rejection is done not on the ground of its insolubility but on account of a dogma extrinsic to it.

Saiva Siddhanta, in my opinion goes more profound, though apparently it proposes three eternal principles pati, pasu, pasam. Western scholars have paid scant attention to this system on the superficial understanding that it is a pluralistic system. But Saiva Siddhanta claims that it is true advaita. We can say in Saiva Siddhanta, Para Sakti has got two aspects, the active and the passive. The active is identified with the Lord and eternal whereas the passive aspect of the sakti is a constituent of the created reality. This is the susceptive cause Bindu as receiving the Nadam or the word or command (ஆணை) of God. Saiva Siddhanta's insight discovered Mahamaya which divides itself into maya proper and Bindu which along with Nadam constitute the composite (sambhava) nature of the created substance. They form a true Upadana or susceptive cause as something of the effect itself.

SYNTHESIS: Upadana and prakrti are two different things and their connection arises from the imperfection of causality in matter like clay. It must be discarded when considering perfect causality of the First Cause. The susceptive principle Upadana does not represent exactly causality but rather an "effectuality" an intrinsic condition of the effect as such. The effect does not proceed actively from the susceptive cause but passively. Therefore, since the First Cause is totally and purely cause, it excludes from itself the nature of an upadana. The upadana is the subjective constituent of the creature, the internal principle of its limitation, its susceptibility to name and form, the formal reason of its contingency, or imperfect conditioned susistence, or the relativenesss of its reality, in a word a witness of original nothingness (asat), of self-unreality in the creature. This is the ontological meaning of "அவன் இவன் ஆனது அவன் அருளால் அன்றி இவன் அவன் ஆகான்...என்றும் இவனே ..." (Tiruvuntiyar)

("That one (the ultimate reality) becomes this one (individual reality) by means of His grace; except by means of His grace this one will not become that one....For ever this one remains this one...") The Upadana is not created in itself, since it is nothing in itself separately; it is created with and in the creation of the creature as the latter's internal condition. Before creation the upadana does not exist, except interpretatively as a logical expression of God's self-communicativeness. அவன் இவன் ஆனது அவன் அருளால். That One becomes this one by means of His grace, arul sakti or Para Sakti or Maha maya which is the passive aspect of Para Sakti.

When we say that God is able to communicate being in the production of creatures, we implicitly mean that it is possible for the communication of being to be received in creatures, or more exactly in the defining limitations of those creatures. The upadana is like the potness of clay in the pot, a "mere name" so to say; it adds no reality of its own to the creatures, but has, like the potness, all its reality in the being of clay of the creature, which it truly modifies since it formally accounts for the creature's limitations, it not being anything else than an internal composition. In short, the absolute principle of the antithesis, that no creature is self-subsisting, does not mean that it should subsist in Brahman, but that owing to its lack of self-subsistence it needs the permanent ontological extrinsic support of the First Cause for the origin and maintenance of its unstable equilibrium. This is the all pervading Bindu symbolized by the horizontal platform or peetha, on which the Adhistatr exerts his omnipotent command, ஆணை, sankalpamatram, by a simple act of the will which yet fills the universe as his outgoing Vāc and symbolized by an unfathomable and insurmountable pillar of light. This is the siddhanta of causality.

It is clear from the above that the doctrine of creation in no way means that nothingness itself evolves into being or, in other words, that nothingness is the prakrti of the world. The principle of the eternal pre-existence of effected reality satkarya, is adequately verified by the Thomistic dictum that creation actively considered is identical with the eternal Creator. All the actuality of creature is actually in God before its creation and remains unchanged in God, unaffected by its participation in the creature. Only the limit, 'not being-all-being' the upadanic or negative feature of the creature is absent from God.

God is the innate (samsiddhika) knowledge, அறியும் அறிவு, svayam-prakasa which pre-contains all the possible acquired knowledge அறிவிக்க அறியும் அறிவுகள் (received consciousness) and remains unaffected by its communication to them.

The original ignorance of a disciple is not a cause which develops into his knowledge, but it is the *why* of its being an acquired know-ledge, conditioned, limited knowledge which all the same is real knowledge. The existence of creatures like the knowledge of the disciple is not mythya but satya upadanic i.e. a true existence as long as the limits are not ignored.

Creatures come from God as their source and from nothing as their starting point, thus verifying both series of texts in the Upanishads which state that being is born from non-being (asatah) as well as from being (satah). It is not more difficult to conceive the non-existence of creatures prior to creation than to conceive the non-extisence of names and forms before their origin.

The distinct reality of creatures does not constitute a plurality in being. Brahman and the world though distinct in substance, are not two beings (advaita); distinction is not synonymous with division (bheda). Being itself is not multiplied by creatures. God is the perfect, self-subsisting infinitive of being, an absolute To-Be, supreme pattern of all human verbs and of their intrinsic identity. God, being, cannot be double. Perhaps it is a slander to call even Madhva a Dwaitist. The world the participle of To-Be may be multiple in itself or rather in its subjects: but the multiplication leaves being unaffected in itself. The transcendent identity of being is verified and absolutely unaffected in itself, whether we considere being in its uncommunicable plenitude or its commu-nicated finitudes. What distinguishes creatures from God is not their being, but the non-being that is in them, a non-being absolu-tely alien to God's identity.

The doctrine of creation, therefore, is a perfect, pure unqualified Advaita and abheda doctrine. In Brahman identity is not contradic-tory to but identical with infinite fecundity and prodigality of Infinite Love. What adaptation will a true understanding of this make in the traditional Advaita?

II. TIME AND ETERNITY

The concepts of being and of creation are intimately connected with the concepts of time and eternity. Our understanding of the former depends on the understanding of the latter. The time factor is also one of the most fundamental characteristics of human experience and hence cannot be defined. We judge that one experienced event is before or after another, as we judge that one material object is to the right or to the left of another. Yet we know a part of the past, at any rate directly by memory, but we know the future only indirectly by probable inference. There is no analogy to this in space. We are not directly aware of events without duration, still less of moments of empty time i.e. time without events. Momentary events, moments of time and the relations which order them in a series are all known only through a process of reflection, abstraction and intellectual construction. There are three types of witnesses to this long process of man's understanding of time: viz. language, mythology and philosophy. Let us therefore examine the witness of words, then of mythology and lastly the history of the philosophical concept of time.

THE WITNESS OF WORDS:

We have a few words in the East and in the West which tell their story. The term 'samaya' is a compound consisting of the prefix sam, and aya derived from the root "i" = to go. Sam gives the basic idea of being together connoting "with", together with," "along with" "conjunction" "union", "thoroughness", "intensity", "completeness" etc. The combination samaya, never occurs in the Rig Veda but is found in the Atharva Veda with the meaning of "coming together", "convenire" "agreement". In its use in the combination 'samayocita' (= befitting the occassion, suitable to the occasion), it gets the additional connotation 'proper to time'. The semantic evolution that has given rise to the sense "time as such" is clear enough from the mere enumeration given above. The Tamil 'polzhuthu' (பொழுது) has a smilar history in Sangam literature with its சிறு பொழுது, பெரும்பொழுது etc. It connotes certain events taking place at fixed and suitable points of time—events necessarily bound up with time so that through metanomy the former's designation is tranferred to the latter.

The term Kala has been connected with the Latin "Calends" Greek "Ker" connoting doom, fate, death. Some scholars derive Kala from the Sanskrit root Kar = to do, to make, to form and then "making, doing, working, an action etc., a deed, a bringing into being". From this variety of meanings there developed the sense of decision, success, victory and finally the decisive point of time, time in general, time as such. Kala was part of the early vocabulary of the Indo-Aryans. Other linguistic scholars like Luke prefer to derive Kala from the IE q^{w}el, a stem which survives in Greek τελεω and preserves the basic sense of time. τελεω in Homer has a rich variety of nuances of meaning. With reference to time as such, it exhibits the meaning "to bring round in its course, to bring on, to come round, to pass, to happen". This gives the hint to the concept of time as cyclic.

By the time of the Atharva Veda, Kala has come into wide use and has been even personified, so much so poets went to the extent of composing hymns in honour of it and representing it as the source of everything. In the middle East also Time was personified and offered sacrifices. In Panini's age Kala had become the term par excellence for denoting time, a term far more important than the previous term samaya.

Gradually time came to be visualized as the destroyer of every thing, with the result that there accrued to it the meaning "time of death", "death" and it was even endowed with the attributes of Yama and finally it came to be identified with him, and regarded as a god. In classical mythology Kala designated a long period of time or an age of the world e.g. Kali Kala, the age of Kali Yuga.

Lastly, the term Kala points to time as the fundamental factor that leads to events whose causes are beyond the grasp of men, i.e. to time in so far as it implies men's fate or destiny.

A traditional Indian concept that should be mentioned in this connection is Kala-Chakra, time visualized as an ever rotating wheel. This peculiar conception may go back to Indo-European unity. The Sanskrit chakra presupposes IE q^{w}elq^{w}los, a noun formed through a reduplication from the root q^{w}el and surviving in Greek Kuklos, cycle and Anglo-Saxon ^{h}wheel. In classical Greek Kuklos means time visualized as a circular movement or wheel's rotation; hence such

meanings as revolution of the seasons, cycle of events, the recurrence of fate etc. The Romans formed cyclus from Kuklos. Thus we see that one of the basic concepts of Indian thought has excellent parallels in the traditions of Greece and Rome.

A study of the etymology and semantic evolution of these forms have profound bearing upon our understanding of Indian mythology. According to Luke, the neuter noun Yugam goes back to IE Yugom, Latin Yugum (Yungo = join), Greek Zugon, gothic Yok meaning team, pair, couple. The term came to acquire a reference to time in as much as it implied the idea of "Yoking" together of couple, human generation, life-span. The derivation from this tradition, of the mythical world ages or the so called Yugas of mythology was a matter of course.

Kalpa is a derivation of IE stem (s)qel (Greek Skalpos = to cut, carve, from which sculptor is derived). The Sanskrit Kalpyatim means to succeed, to be partaken of, to be shared by. In mythology Kalpa has come to mean a fabulous period of time, yet determined, circumscribed, not founded upon human experience, duration that is indefinite without human limitations. It is this conviction that has persuaded myth-makers to visualize Kalpa of the gods extending over fantastically long spans of time.

Muhurtha is a prakritism and traceable to IE base signifying " short "; in Greek brachus, Latin brevis. Though a prakrit formation from IE base, muhu is pretty old occuring as it does in the Rig Veda a number of times with the sense of suddenness and the like.

By linguistic analysis of the terms used, Betty Heimann showed that in India space concept seemed to have been primary and the temporal concept was derived after it. Agra (front) acquires the meaning of "beginning" and agre (in front of) acquires the meaning of "in the beginning." Its Greek parallel αρχη has a similar history. Brahspati in his R.V. X. 121.1 sang "In the beginning (= Agre) rose hiranyagarbha ". Pascat meaning "from the back" acquires the meaning of "afterwards". Adhvan (literally "the path") comes to mean "in the course of time". Karma (literally "the step") comes to denote "in succession".

Most instructive for this fundamental law of superiority of space over time is the main term for time Kala which means originally "part", "portion". The Tamil word Kal = ¼, a foot.

"The West conceives the idea of Eternity chiefly under the aspect of Time, as being above and beyond all empirical measures of Time or else imagined as an infinitely extended measure of time. In India, on the other hand, it is not Time but Space that is the primary aspect under which everything is conceived". (Betty Heimann in New Review April 1941, p 340 fol. "Indian Concept of the Eternal.")

The concept of the Eternal is generally approached in the philosophical and theological systems of India from the angle of spatial thinking, though there is a bewildering diversity of other approaches: psychological, logical, even grammatical aspects are introduced in company with the primary one of space. We may cite the following examples: the polar notions of the eternal as the immeasurably small and the immeasurably great (ஓங்கி ஆழ்ந்து அகன்ற நுண்ணியனே. நூல் உணர் உணரா நுண்ணியோன் காண்க, மேலொடு கீழாய் விரிந்தோன் காண்க.—திருவாசகம்; நுண்ணியான் மிகப் பெரியான்... தண்ணியான் வெய்யான் நம் தலைமேலான் மனத்துளான் — திருஞான சம்பந்தர் தேவாரம்), as the immanent contrasted yet combined with the non-immanent; the spatial concepss of the eternal as immanent within the empirical phenomena (antrhita, gudha, gupta); of the eternal as the compact: nir-antara (that which has no interval), satata (that which is connected), satatana (that which is together), acala, (that which cannot be shaken), sthira (that which is stable), niyata (that which is fixed), nitya (that which is static and permanent), ananta (that which has no end). Again the concept of the eternal as that which has no limit (a-diti, the boundless), aty-antikam (that which transcends the the ends; முன்னைப் பழம் பொருட்கும் முன்னைப் பழம் பொருளே, பின்னைப் புதுமைக்கும் பேர்த்தும் அப்பெற்றியனே); a-parimita (that which cannot be measured), tiro-hita (that which is transversal).

Betty Heimann remarks: "The Western idea of a static Eternity, a static Absolute does not satisfy the Indian mind whose fundamental concepts are generally wider and leave room for a dynamic Eternity, which, orginating from, and reaching beyond the empirical world of phenomena, enters the realm of the transcendental". We may give the following examples: vibu, (the all-pervading and thus

dynamically omnipresent); sarvatra-ga (that which proceeds in all directions); bhuman (boundless width, literally, that which is ever becoming); nirvana (that which has blown apart, dissolved all differentiations and specifications).

There are also —

numerical concepts like eko a-dvitiyam i.e. the unique, sunya, the sizeless (suna, swollen which has no definite size).

logical concepts as paramarthatas (the Esoteric Eternal) contrasted with vyavaharatas (the exoteric. lit. the practical or better practically), and with the worldly aspect laukika.

logical — grammatical concepts: The neuter brahman as opposed to the personal brahma; nirvanam as the Absolute.

temporal concepts like an-adi (that which has no beginning), a-mara or a-mrta (that which is immortal), a-kshaya; a-kshara, a-vinasa (that which is imperishable, indestructible), sarva-kalika (that which has existed all the time), cirantana, ciranjivi (that which is of long duration, that which lives long), purana (that which is very old and venerable).

All these Indian concepts of eternity, we shall see, contain the aspects of the Christian doctrine of eternity. It is also acknowledged as a fundamental law of Indian mind that the new does not supplant the old but remains valid along with it. And hence these complementary ideas may find fuller development through an East-Wes dialogue.

THE WITNESS OF MYTHOLOGY:

Myth is not history but it is recognized as containing the philosophy of history. It is thus Puranic descriptions and speculations must be understood about cycles of events, natural and historical, physical and psychical, individual and social, in their uniform and endless succession. The Vedic primitive reflection expressed its experience of a cycle of seasons by a unit, samvatsara, meaning the year. It did not use the abstract term Kala. Prajapati the creator is spoken of as the Year. Rig Veda X 129 declares that Samvatsara has as its constituents origin, perdurance and destruction of everything. This

would find elaboration in later speculations. Yajnavalkya declared that from the Speechless the year revolved with its days.

The Jains thought and taught that the universe was composed of six constituents viz. Jiva, Ajiva, Dharma, Adharma. Kala and Pudgala. Kala was imagined as an endless series of cycles of duration. It is symbolically represented by a cosmic or world-bounding serpent, sarpin, coiling and biting its own tail and thus creeping, revolving, like a wheel, half the cycle ascending and the other half descending. The present phase is said to be the descending part when every thing is moving towards utter chaos. The twenty four Tirthankaras belong to this descending avasarpini period. After this the ascending phase, Utsarpini, will start. Thus on and on endlessly.

It is in the Puranas, especially in the Vishnu Purana that Nidhi, the so-called science of time was elaborated in two different traditions, one of yugas, and the other of Manvantaras, which later on were combined together. Time was arranged in three ranges, firstly the horological time, secondly the calendar time measured in units of days and months, used in determining the seasons, historical eras and dynasties, and thirdly the mythical cosmic time in terms of the life-span of the Devas and the life-span of Brahma, the creator, which perhaps was borrowed from the Chaldean mythologies.

Truti, a particle of time, is the smallest unit of duration. It varies between 1/10,000,000,000 of a second and one Kshana. Kshana, moment, loosely ranging from 2/45 of a second to about 4 seconds.

Nimesha or Nimisha: a blink or twinkling of the eye and one nimesha is equal to 8 Kshanas.

Kashtha, the pulse beat.

Kala = 30 Kashthas = 48 seconds.

Ghatika — from Ghatha, water bowl with a hole pierced and placed in water. The time it took to sink was a ghatika.

It was also called a Nalika = 30 Kalas = 1,440 seconds or 24 minutes. Two Ghatikas or two Nalikas = one Muhurtha = 28,800 seconds = 48 minutes, 1/30 of a day.

Divasa = a solar day = 15 muhurthas.

Nakta = night = 15 muhurthas.

Divasa + Nakta = a day = 30 muhurthas.

15 days = one Paksha.

30 days of mortals = one month.

6 months of mortals = one ayana = ½ a day of the immortal devas.

2 ayanas = 1 year of mortals = 1 day of the gods. i.e. day and night of the gods.

4000 years of the gods = 1,440,000 solar or mortal years plus 1/10 of it (= 400 years of the gods = 144,000 mortal years = Sandhya = twilight) plus 1/10 of it = 400 years of the gods = sandhyamsa, twilight) = satya Yuga or Krtya Yuga. i.e. 1,728,000 mortal years.

Similarly 3000 + 300 + 300 years of the gods or 1,296,000 mortal years form the Treta Yuga, and 2000 + 200 + 200 years of the gods or 864,000 mortal years form the Dwapara Yuga.

And finally, 1000 years of the gods = 3,60,000 mortal years
plus 100 years of the gods = 36,000 mortal years
plus 100 years of the gods = 36,000 mortal years

i.e. 1200 years of the gods or 4,32,000 mortal years form the Kali Yuga.

We are in Kali Yuga and it began at midnight between February 17th and 18th of the year 3102 B.C. at the time of the accession of Parikshit son of Abhimanyu to the throne of Hastinapur. That is why L. D. Swamikkannupillai's Indian chronology begins from the year 3102 B.C. and comes upto 2000 A.D, (Publi. by Govt. and Co, Royapuram, Madras). We are living in the year 5076 of the Kali Yuga ; still 4,27,000 years have to pass before we can expect Vishnu to appear in the form of Kalki to destroy the world by flood and fire ; adharma will go on increasing for 4,27,000 years. It is a frightful prospect, seeing the state of corruption at present. Then the next Sarya Yuga will start.

These four Yugas together form the Catur Yuga or the Maha Yuga or total of 4,320,000 mortal years. 1000 Maha Yugas i.e. 4,320,000,000 years of men make up an ardha Kalpa or a day time of Brahma after which the worlds are dissolved in pralaya and Brahma sleeps for a period of an ardha Kalpa. At the end of a full Kalpa or 8.640,000,000 years of men, Brahma wakes up and begins to create again the gods and the worlds. Thus one Brahma lives for 100 Brahma years or 100 × 360 × 8,640,000,000 mortal years after which there comes a Maha Pralaya in which not only the worlds and the gods but Brahma himself is dissolved. Maha pralaya lasts an equal time of the life-span of one Brahma during which Vishnu sleeps on the waters of pralaya, attended by Lakshmi alone. At the end of that period, a lotus burgeons from his naval and from the lotus a new Brahma appears and begins his life-span. Thus endlessly. Srshthi which means discharge, the beginning, is an active phase which is followed by a phase called "Sthiti", preservation or evolution. The phase of Sthiti is followed by the phase "laya" or involution or dissolution. After one cycle of such Srshthis, Sthitis and laya there comes a pralaya after which starts the pra-srishthi, and pra-sthiti.

This colossol structure of the temporal world was excogitated and formulated between the Upanishadic and the Puranic time in India. If Purana is a philosophy of history, we have to see what this philosophy of duration really signifies.

If myth is true, it is because it deals with what is real par excellence, because it deals with the reality that accounts for what exists in time and space. It reveals the deeper, authentic meaning of life by showing how one particular mode of being in the world came about. Myth reveals but it does not explain; it is not concerned about apparent contradictions. Historical and logical precisions are irrelevent in the world of myth, because myth expresses not an erudition but a consciousness of a reality. Myth prescribes for men the mode of being in the world which it reveals to him, his cosmic dimension, the laws that govern the specific nature of his human existence etc. Since the mythical model is not part of the temporal, but some sort of an eternal instant, it remains paradigmatic and can be repeated over and over again. The exemplary nature of myth is most evident in the ritual re-enactment of a holy, primordial event. Recitation of the

myth accompanied by a dramatic representation makes the primordial creative event present in time. And in this way it mediates to those who hear it an insight into the holy ground of empirical or phenomenological reality.

Thus the Brahmostsavam in Siva temples depicting the Tripura Samharam - the destruction of the three Malas and hence of the salvation of Souls, and the Marriage of Meenakshi the Eternal Feminine which is always there and the Birth of Skanda are all Eternal Events. Neither Myth nor Ritual explains anything; they rather express in parallel, more often intertwined and always mutually complementary ways the fundamental religious experience of archaic man in a cosmos that reveals the creative presence of the Supernatural Reality.

St. Paul writing to Timothy his disciple warns him about people who "will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths" (II Tim. 4:4). But Christians have realized that the incongruity is not between the Bible and myth but between Bible and falsity.

In Myth as in Platonism, time is but the moving image of the unmoving eternity, a never ceasing repetition of creation through a process of periodical regeneration.

In the Judeo-Christian tradition, time is creation itself in the act of being accomplished; it is salvation itself in the act of being accomplished.

Historical events have a value in themselves because they mark God's interventions in time. They do not mark a recurrence of archetypes, but a new unique and decisive moment in an irreversible process. The message of the Prophets is much more about these interventions of God in history than about His presence in the Cosmos.

Hence the prophetic historic intervention of God in the Christian tradition and the hieratic manifestations of the ground of our being in Indian religious thought are complementary and must be held together. Future East-West dialogue will evolve a synthesis.

PHILOSOPHICAL DEVELOPMENT:

Sifting the witness of linguistics and mythology we get the elementary notions of time and eternity from the early days. We have the notion of time as a cycle of events. The Jaina speculation contributed the notion that time is a constituent of the universe. The Atharva Veda which popularised the use of the word Kala considered it as the source of all things. The Puranas went further to say that not only the origin but the perdurance and disappearance are also effected by time. Time thus came to be elevated to be the very first cause. But the Svetasvatara Upanishad, as we have mentioned earlier, condemned this idolatry of time and affirmed that God is the author of time as well.

The Nyaya - Vaiseshika system swung to the ultra-realistic view that time was something real i.e. a substance existing by itself. The Saptapadarthi, the work which first effected the synthesis of Nyaya and Vaiseshika, says that time is that which is characterised by creation, sustentation, and destruction: Kalastu utpatti sthiti vinasa lakshnas trividah (Gurumurthi: Saptapadarthi v. 16). This statement is ambivalent and opposite schools could make use of it. The Advaitins refuted and rejected the ultra-realistic view of time, since they hold that the self itself is the cause of the manifestation of time in events and things in accordance with the varying conditions of their appearance, making a separate category of time unnecessary.

Samkhya system did not accept the existence of any real time. Time is only the mode of the constitution of things manifesting as past, present and future. The question whether time exists in time or out of time could not have made any sense for the Samkhyas. (Collected Papers of Prof. S. S. Suryanarayana Sastry. Advaita and the concept of Progress. Miller Lectures). The appearance of Kala as a separate category is a creation of our buddhi (buddhi - nirmana), as it represents the order or mode in which the buddhi records its perceptions.

In the Pancaratra system time is one of the impure creations and a constituent of creatures (Das Gupta: Hist. of Ind. Phil. Vol. III page 42). It is imagined as a sort of energy. Prakriti, Purusha and Kala form a triple-basis for the development of all the succeeding categories.

Ramanuja discards the view of Sankara that the cause alone is true and all effects are false. He asserts that permanence is not identical with reality. Anityatva or non-eternal nature is the same as destructability and does not make a thing false. According to Ramanuja, if the "present" is denied it would mean universal negation, for the past and the future are never perceived by us; moreover the present cannot be conceived as something different or unrelated and independent of the past and the future. Since the word "eternal" means that which is never destroyed and time is said to be eternal, time is co-existent with God. Though time is one and eternal, it can appear as limited and many. Thus time is conceived as the material cause with reference to its own modifications and as the efficient cause with reference to everything else. Just like God, Time too is all-pervading.

Bue Meghanadari, one of the earliest members of the Ramanuja school, took great pains to show that Ramanuja himself discarded the view that time is a separate entity.

Sri Saila Srinivasa explained that Brahman may himself remain unchangeable and yet may be the cause of changes in his two-fold body substance. In his own nature He is called the instrumental cause and, in so far as he contains matter (acit) and souls (cit) in his nature, he is the material cause.

The Anibudhnya-Samhita of the Pancaratra school teaches that Niyati (destiny) and Kala are the two manifestations of the power of transcendent Kala as arising from Aniruddha. From this Kala arises sattva guna and from it the Rajaguna from which the tamo guna. It is further said that it is time which connects and separates. The Kala, of course, in its own turn derives its power from the self-perceiving activity (sudarsana) of Vishnu. It is this dynamic function of Kala that makes prakriti transform itself into its evolutes. "There are two forms of Brahman, time and the timeless" Maitri Upanishad had said. "I alone am the imperishable time", Krishna had said (B.G.X. 33).

In Madhva's system, Prakrti or Maya, a consort of God, is the material cause of the material world. Time is a direct product of it. God out of His creative desire produced from prakrti three masses of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and all the rest from them, through the twenty four tattvas. Time (Kala) is coexistent with all-pervading

space. It exists in itself (svagata) and is, like space, the support or vehicle (adhara) of everything else and it is also the common cause of the production of all objects. This ultra-realistic understanding of time naturally attracts the strictures which the Absolutist Advaitin levels against time.

In the Saiva Siddhanta, time is considered as the evolute of the suddha-asuddha maya and along with niyati etc forms the co-principle of the evolution of the world from prakriti or asuddha maya. Siva-jnana Siddhiyar says, "It is difficult to know the nature of God in the way we can know the nature of the world. Still (if you want to know) hear this: Think of God on the analogy of Time which brings the world into existence, maintains it and takes it out of existence without itself undergoing changes". Again, "If it is said that it is time that produces these changes and is the only God, No. Time is itself inert and non-intelligent. Though it is true we find time producing changes, it is because God as the efficient cause actuates time which is the instrumental cause". (Sutra I).

In the West, Heraclitus and Parmenides did not separate time from change and motion in the world. Plato vaguely defined time as "the moving image of eternity."

In classical Greek: αιων (= eternal, everlasting) means (1) a life-time: (2) an age. a generation or an epoch. (The present age and the age to come, இம்மை, மறுமை.) (3) a very long time: aeon: an immeasurably or indefinitely long period of time: Age (compare with Tamil ஊழி from ஊழ்: What is of long duration. ஊழ்த்தல், intensive form of உள் = to exist long with an extended form); αιπαινος, from of old; δzανος for ever, perpetually; ειστοναιωνα = for ever. Plato took the word αιωνιως to denote that which has neither beginning nor end and that which is subject to neither change nor decay, that which is above time, but of which time is a moving image, therefore above and beyond time. He said, "To attach eternity to the created world is impossible." There is a difference between simple existence for ever and eternity. The essential point in this picture is that eternity is always the same and always indivisible.

Aristotle defined time as "the number of motion according to before and after".

Plotenus objected to Aristotle's definitition saying that making time as a number answers only 'how much' and not 'what' time is. Time, he said, resides in the discrete operations of the soul in so far as the soul successively makes and sustains nature. He did not answer the objection that the gulf between soul and nature is unbridged and while proper time is spiritual and discrete, natural time is unaccountably continuous and material.

While the whole world imagined only a cyclic form of time deduced from the cyclic return of natural phenomena, the Parsees and the Jews alone had clung to a linear concept of time. (Heinrich Zimmer: "Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization." p. 22). St. Augustine seems to have been the first to formulate the modern idea of time: unique unrepeatable phenomenon (E. Frank: St. Augustine and GK Thought). Such a conception of history was unknown to the Greek philosophers. History was for them a natural process where everything recurred in periodic cycles. This is precisely the Hindu idea.

Augustine shows inductively that time is a distention of the soul with future and past segments stretching both ways from the distended present of attention. He agrees with Aristotle on the concept of the totality of time but differs from him on the primacy he gives to the "now".

For Avicenna, time is the measure of passage from one part to another, while the observer imaginatively making cuts in the flux gives being to the instant. As the measure of all possible change, time is indirectly applicable to everything affected by mutability. In Averroes' thought time is potential in motion and becomes actual number through the soul's numbering of motion.

William of Ockham taught that time is predicated per se of its subject, the primary motion, as risible is predicated of man. St. Albert the Great thought time is number sui generis both formal and material. Awareness of inward change contains a virtual awareness of primary motion. Against Averroes he said that time was both materially and formally independent of the soul.

An ulra-realistic view of time is given by thinkers like Gassendi, Newton, Clarke and Prof. Alexander. Gassendi defined time as

something which is neither substance nor accident and which is eternal and uncreated,

Newton and Clarke in a somewhat similar way held that time is a divine attribute. They did not explain, how while there is no succession in God, His attribute, time, could be essentially successive. Prof. Alexander seems to have affinities with these views. He considered time to be the fundamental stuff of the universe, from which the Deity is progressively emerging. He, however, repudiated the pantheistic interpretations of his theory.

On the other extreme, we know Kant reduced time to an a priori intuition of the sensibility i.e. something which belongs to the texture of the senses. Leibnitz loosely defined time as "the order of succession", but explained it almost like the theory of the Thomists.

H. Bergson classified time in two kinds viz. the heterogenous time and the homogenous time. Heterogenous time is the time of our experience "la durēe". Homogenous time, which is what we mean when we use the term time, is in Bergson's view merely space on to which the mind projects psychological time which is the succession of our conscious states, thus making it appear to be a successive and continuous reality. Hence homogenous time is an illusion for there is no succession in things themselves, since one state has entirely disappeared when another appears. Heterogenous time is not illusory. The devllopment of our conscious states is, however, purely qualitative and its parts can only be qualitatively, never quantitatively distinguished and therefore they are absolutely heterogenous. They are a series of irreducible different qualities which can therefore never form a unity or continuity.

The Thomistic analysis of time is as follows. Time is a species of duration. To say that a thing endures is to say that it continues to exist. Therefore duration is permanence in existence. Duration cannot be identified with the thing that endures, with the thing's existence. The definition of natural time develops from three inductive determinations, viz. time as something of motion, time as continuous, and time as numbr. Time is a continuum. A continuum is formally one and materially partitive. Man estimates time by noting motion according to before and after. Time and motion

are closely connected but are not identical, for motion belongs to the thing which is moving, whereas time affects all things everywhere, and secondly motion can be fast or slow, whereas time is not. Therefore motion is measured by time. In sensing time, man senses not just motion but the successiveness within motion, which implies units before and after. Pure succession is not the same as time, since some successions are not temporal, as for instance the succession in the series of ordinal numbers. All these elements were included in the Aristotelian definition which was adopted by St. Thomas Aquinas and a great many of the Scholastic philosophers. Time is defined therefore as the "number of movement in respect of before and after". Number is multitude measured by unity. Time springs from the division of continuum by the "nows". Since therefore time is number the principal property of time is to be the measure of motion. Aristotle said, "Numerus motus secundum prius et posterius: The enumeration of movement as encountered within the horizon of the earlier and later". (phys. IV. 11; 219 b. cf. Plato, Timaeus 37, 10 ff; St. Albert the Great. S. Theol. I. 21. 2; St. Thomas Aquinas: Sum Theol Iq 10; a 1-6; Contra Gentiles I 15.55).

Aristotle raised the question whether there would be time if there were not soul or mind, but gave no answer to it. At first sight, it appears as if time as a duration were something which exists quite apart from the mind, but a little reflection shows that all that can be said to exist in this way is the moving thing and its successive states, the continued existence of motion not being found in nature. Thus the duration of motion is not a reality found in nature apart from the mind. It is our mind which is endowed with memory, which gives unity and so being to motion and its duration in the foundation of time as a measure, since only in so far as it is an enduring whole does it lend itself to measurement.

The Thomistic school declares that time exists by reason of the present, the instant which is not a part of time but the indivisible link of its parts, the past and the future. This instant must exist since it is the measure of unity of a definite state of a moving thing and without such a definite state, the moving thing itself could not exist. It is, however, present only in so far as it is considered by the mind in rela-

tion to the past and the future; and it is clear that it cannot make the past and the future exist since the past cannot exist in the present and to speak of the present presupposes that the future is not yet existing. Therefore neither time as a duration, nor time as a measure exists or is real apart from the human mind. This must not blind us to the fact that there is an element of time which has such extramental existence viz. the indivisible of time: the instant.

The totality of time depends on the capacity of the soul to combine in one whole parts that are never co-existent as if they were co-existent. Time in its quantitative totality is a relation of reason. But despite dependence on the soul, time is first and foremost a being of nature and only secondarily, from the view point of definitional totality, a being of reason. Time is as physically real as motion: it shares motion's imperfect mode of being that needs supplementary work of the mind to eke out its totality. Motion in its totality cannot serve as time's physical foundation because it is no less a relation of reason than time. Nor is time an abstractly universal continuum; it must properly reside in a numerically one subject. Hence the Averroistic account is still strongly favoured by Scholastics that time exists formally in the mind but fundamentally in motion.

Irreversibility of time must also be affirmed. That time cannot recur follows from its unity; a reversible time-order means the destruction of time. Irreversibility is at bottom necessary because it bespeaks the 'before' and 'after' that are properties of time. Time is unidirectional because each phase of the primary motion is numerically distinct from its neighbours, before and after.

The Indian concept of time is said to be cyclic. But, as Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevân has pointed out, it is rather a spiral time than cyclic. Giambattista Vico of Naples (1688-1744) had already elaborated the spiral rather than cyclic time. Even in the physical movement of the material world, whether of the planets or systems of galaxies or of electrons and protons we could say, I think, that there is absolutely no strictly cyclic movement but only spiral movement, since the centres of the orbits of the revolving bodies are also in continued motion. One whole revolution may be constantly repeated but the identity of successive revolutions is specific rather than numerical so

that the date of each event, its position on the time line, is always irrevocably different. That is the meaning, I think, of Vishnu in the Varaha avatara telling the salvaged earth, "Every time I am saving you like this". Indeed the very now terminating an event uniquely determines the event: i.e. time is irreversible because the now, its principle and measure is always formally other.

In the Old Testament the term used to describe the being of God connotes God's being in so far as it is superior to man and his existence. Thus the notion of eternity as applied to God only expresses endless duration rather than strict superiority to time. It emphasises the absolute reliability of God, of his faithfulness, of his grace and love, of his decrees. Reflections on the absolute otherness of this eternity with regard to time appear in late Judaism.

The New Testament speaks of eternity as a divine attribute. But time or history is merged into it. The concept of incarnation implying that God the unchanging reality became truly man was a scandal and foolishness to philosophers. Incarnation, however, is where God himself become man while remaining eternal God. God is eternal as "He who changes in another," as Karl Rahner, one of the modern Catholic theologians notes. Hence the unity in duality (advaita) of eternity and time or of eternity and history.

One can distinguish in general three uses of the word eternity: 1) Eternity as unlimited time, which is the way the unreflecting mind represents the eternity of God. This is a constant temptation for philosophical thought. 2) Eternity as timelessness, the eternity of the abstract truths. 3) Eternity as real duration which transcends time, in that it negates the essential characteristic of time, namely its division into moments. This is the decisive notion of eternity: it was given classic expression by Boethius (480-524 A.D.) in his definition of eternity as "Interminabilis vitae tota simul et perfecta possessio". (1) *Interminabilis* excludes any idea of beginning and end and thus preserves what is positive in the popular conception of endless time. (முன்னைப் பழம் பொருட்கும் முன்னைப் பழம் பொருளே, பின்னைப் புதுமைக்கும் பேர்த்தும் அப் பெற்றியனே-திருவாசகம். This gives the meaning of stretching back the beginning and stretching further the end indefinitely. ஆதியும் அந்தமும் அகன்றோன், ibid. அகல்தல்

can also signify that He is absolutely free from beginning and end. எல்லா உயிர்க்கும் ஈறாய் ஈறின்மையானாய், ibid.—endless end, imperishable goal.) (2) *Vitae possessio* goes beyond the negative abrogation of time as it is represented in the timelessness of abstract conception (அழிவிலா ஆனந்த வாரி, ibid. Sat chit ananda. போற்றி என் வாழ் முதல் ஆகிய பொருளே, ibid. வாழ்முதல் life-giving life). The most essential element is the (3) *tota simul* which excludes any difference or distinction between individual discrete moments of time. Eternity is not a duration stretching out interminably, but a duration which in its entire length, as it were, is gathered into one single moment—a moment which is permanent because it is identical with being, the nunc stans as opposed to the passing moment of our experience (nunc fluens). In this sense eternity is only another name for the unchangeableness of God. (தோற்றமும் சிறப்பும் ஈற்றொடு புணரிய மாப்பேரூழி, ibid. புணரிய gives the meaning of union, முழுமையும் உடன் நிகழ்தல், tota simul. முன்புமாய்ப் பின்பும் முழுதுமாய்ப் பரந்த முத்தனே முடிவிலா, முதலே ibid. This also corresponds to the idea of tota simul. முத்தனே முடிவிலா முதல் corresponds to interminabilis vitae possessio).

In a deeper sense, it means that the Absolute Being transcends the entire order of beings and that it excludes in its unending living density any division, limitation or measure. A being merely absolved from interior change but in which earlier and later could be distinguished by its real relation to changing beings would be similar to these beings. And it would not really be unchangeable, since the relationship could change. (The story of Markandeya could be adduced to illustrate this point.) If we are treating of a being which is identical with consciousness, it would be contradictory to suppose that it could, without changing, persist in the manner of "before" and "after". The moment B, precisely because it comes after A, cannot be lived identically with A. Perfect changelessness in a consciousness demands that there be no transition from "not yet" to "no longer". The completely unchangeable being knows only the present and is identical with it. Anthropomorphic way of talking about God, whether in the Indian puranas or in the Bible, just offends against this truth; but thinkers of all faiths have attempted to correct this anthropomorphism by posing necessary questions. (cfr. Confessions of St. Augustine, also Manickavacagar).

Eternity as a concept is impossible to comprehend. To go beyond time appears to us more mysterious than to go beyond space. We can think of eternity only in an act which occurs in time. When it is said that the divine duration is 'tota simul', it is meant only that its different elements are fulfilled "in the same instant," or it is in this way we understand simultaneity in our conceptual categories. But it is a contradiction to expound eternity in terms of time. The idea of eternity, like the other attributes of God is negative only in the manner in which it is approached conceptually. But it is not negative in itself. Even perception and judgement of time are possible only when one transcends time. Even our experience of the present is not a point (no length, no breadth, no thickness). It is experienced as an extent of time (protensive time) within consciousness, is tota simul in its own way to the consciousness. The existence of man being immersed in time necessarily includes—whether one is conscious of it or not — past and future. The divine consciousness (cit) is being (sat) itself; its subjectivity is truth; thus it is tota simul in one moment which includes all possible duration. In a deeper sense the spirit transcends time because it has the capacity to think of it and to make judgements concerning it and also because it seeks to free itself from time by opening itself to truths and values which cannot be destroyed by the passing of time.

We are not eternal, but there is within us something which points to and participates in the eternal and which enables us to conceive of the eternal not merely as a negation.

If we see them from the perspective of radical dualism, eternity and time have no relation one to the other. They can only be joined together by the doctrine of creation, considered under the aspect of participation, which considers eternity as the origin, ground and measure of time. Time is contained in eternity not as though it were contained in a longer period of time (like a month in a year), but as something from which time derives its being and unity, something which "holds it together" (continet, contains, συνέχειν). "The spirit of the Lord, indeed, fills the whole world, and that which holds all things together knows every word that is said"—(Wisdom 1, 7.) Eternity is not "in the beginning" or "in the end" of time. It is both that which gives rise to time and that from which

time ceaselessly flows and also that which bestows upon time its meaning. In India Omkara, Nada or Sabda from which all the aksharas flow out can be taken as a perfect symbol of eternity.

So too the presentness (or simultaneity) of each of our moments in eternity is not a being together at the same time as though they were two periods of time contained within the same duration. It consists rather in this that the whole order of time and each of its moments receives being through the eternal act.

Creatio active spectata est ipse Creator.

Creatio passive spectata nihil aliud est

nisi relatio quaedam cum novitate

essendi. (S. Th.) i.e. Creation actively considered is the Creator himself; creation passively considered is nothing else than a sort of relation with a newness of being.

From this it follows that things are present to God from all eternity in their temporality. (S. Th. I q. 14. A 13). According to St, Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, God does not know because things are but rather things are because God knows them. His knowledge (cit) which is himself (sat) is an eternal vision because things themselves are eternally in his presence. This appears absurd only if eternity is still unwittingly measured against time.

CONCLUSIONS:

The true meaning of "eternity" excludes the conception of a God who was lonely before he called creation into being. That is if one imagines that at a given moment of his infinite duration things begin to be, it will amount to posit a change in the divine consciousness or to conceive the duration of things as part of the duration of God, conceiving eternity as a parallel to time.

The world began. But not at a certain moment in eternity (which indeed has no moments) and God was at no time without the world, for there is nothing temporal before time. God has no pre-view, but only vision, fecund, omnipotent, (Bija Sakthi), free creative vision. Saiva Siddhantha affirms that God creates by a mere act of the will (Sankalpamatra) and He who is the destiny of the world (omega,

அந்தம்) is the same as the origin of the world (alpha, ஆதி) in one and the same eternal act (அந்தம் ஆதி என்மனார் புலவர், Sutram 1).

The eternal presence of things before God makes it possible to hope that time will be redeemed and restored. Eternal life is so called because the soul will be immersed in the eternal vision of God as he is : Paramartika citta. In this sense creation will participate in the eternity of God.

Perhaps Phenomenology and Existentialism point a way to a future synthesis of our various systems. Absolute scientism, admitting only experimentation and verification as methods to true knowledge is rejected. Cartesian doubt is rejected as opposed to our fundamental experience and all the systems that began arising from this doubt. So too Pure Consciousness in its ivory tower claiming to be the one and only Reality. Going further than scholasticism which attributes intentionality to the representative ideas of Aristotle, Husserl sees intentionality in our very consciousness. Hence the primacy is asserted of our lived-world as our objective world with the Husserlian slogan " back to things themselves."

In the Existential philosophy as that of Heidegger, man is seen as a historical being even ontologically, and time is expounded in terms of history of being. Time is not just a determination of physical and material reality. It is also a determination of the Spirit. Physical, objectivist, external time cannot be the starting point for reaching the notion of time. Measurement itself is possible only for spiritual being which experiences what time is in the light of its own inner self-realisation. Time exists in man's own action. Time is extrapolated i.e. projected outside by the spirit from the flow of the " now " which the spirit experiences. This projected something is considered by the spirit as quantifying i.e. measuring the duration of real objects. It is again imagined as a sort of field which is in itself thought to be empty. Every moment is of equal importance and each lives by the annulment of the previous. The movement of the world and of man takes place in this field or medium. Here man is exposed to this medium which is time and made its slave as though to a cosmic power. We are determined by the past which cannot be reversed. We have to build upon our past but we are constantly planning for the

future. The present is barely a dividing line where the future incessantly slips into the past. This means that it is our freedom which transforms the future into the present and decides it beforehand but the future makes freedom what it is and challenges it to be. Without the future there would be no past i.e. yesterday would lose its meaning and hence its reality, if today had no tomorrow. But since the end, death as such, comprises the end of all present moments, the present is always absolutely determined by the end.

The experience of time therefore does not depend upon its measurable length alone. We can make proper use of time and thus live our lives fully and enrich them or waste our time and lose it. Time is not a simple possession; it has to be conquered. This makes the experience of time a constant urge similar to conscience though not identical with it. Full satisfaction can only be achieved if we succeed in giving time the right content.

The primordial notion of time must therefore be that it is *the mode of becoming proper to finite freedom in bodily form,* a coming from an unmastered beginning in a deliberate choice of one's own reality and an arrival at an irrevocable unique completion of such an act. Since the history of nature and the world is essentially determined by the history of freedom, it is clear that the flow of time is not a power that enslaves man but a particular and deficient element of the present dialogal time of freedom.

Therefore the Existentialists affirm that existence itself is internal time. It exposes itself to the otherness of the external world, to its history and hence to the time which characterises this history. This means that existence or internal time is part of the world and external time. The passage of time in our life is seen as the strongest link between facticity and existentiality. By facticity is meant the fact that we are "thrown into" a historical situation and a world which we cannot choose. Existentiality indicates our task of achieving our essentiality. And finally essentiality means making ourselves entirely our own, making it our own design.

Man's internal time is always alienated from him in external time. Nonetheless he only finds his internal time in the external time of the world. These two are elements of the one time of man. When

we do not truly reflect on our internal time of experience and consider it only as a property of external time in which it is entirely absorbed, external time becomes an endless succession of self-contained units of time, the eternal return of the same cyclic time. But since internal time must be understood as the unity of beginning and end before God, since it is a coming forth from God and a return to Him, the cyclic pattern remains justifiable and necessary, since the protological transcendental beginning and the eschatological transcendental end can only be thought of in categories which embrace objects and can only be brought about in external time. But then again, since external time can only be thought of as a condition of possibility of the internal time of human existence and since this existence has a true end, the fullness of time, the linear interpretation of external time is also true about this time. Hence the two properties of time, the cyclic and the linear, are theologically indispensable.

Giambattista Vico first spoke of time as neither cyclic nor simply linear but as spiral. Yet the protological point of this spiral meets the eschatological point. The Omega Point, Pere Teilhard de Chardin affirmed, is the Alpha Point. It is this meaning that I ascribe to the Saiva Siddhanta's maha vakya அந்தம் ஆதி (Antham Aadi, Saiva Siddhanta Sutra 1.)

III. DIALOGUE AND MAN'S BECOMING

No religion can afford to remain outside the mainstream which sweeps through the world of thought. No philosophy can afford any longer to exclude or ignore things which are opposed to the system it has adopted. Mental maturation makes one realize that there are values even in those doctrines which seem most opposed to one's own. Now a profound change has taken place in man's self-understanding. People experience themselves in a new way. Our concern here is how religion and philosophy readjust themselves in this new situation.

At the turn of this century, a new style of thinking about God and about man and therefore about religion and philosophy was initiated by the French philosspher, Maurice Blondel. A static view of man and an extrincist view of God had somehow dominated Christian thought for some time. God had been conceived as standing over

against man and somehow directing human history from above to achieve His own eternal purposes. Such an old time religion is felt by modern man to belong to a strangely different world and hence irrelevant to his life. This strangely different world, Blondel roundly affirmed, did not exist. If a Christian thinker seeks to understand the meaning of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, he ought to open himself to dialogue with contemporary religions, philosophies and cultures. Man has now discovered himself to be not a static but a dynamic reality as the Second Vatican Council has recognized and declared. Man comes to be in a process in which the world of men is involved. Man evolves into what he is through dialogue with others. Consciousness was not given to man readymade. Man's consciousness and his language bear witness to the fact that man becomes what he is through human conversation, through being addressed and through responding.

Dialogue means that man listens and responds. It is often a happy sharing on the level of information and also on the deeper level of self-knowledge and values of life. It is man's response that makes him distinct from others. The measure of freedom in his response is the measure of his responsibility, the measure of his personality. Not only his consciousness but his emotional life too matures by a dialogical process. Love and hostility, acceptance and rejection and so forth evoke in him the power to repond and to respond freely. His religion and philosophy, his entire mental and spiritual world is thus created by a process in which the entire community is involved.

Dialogue is also dialectical. There may be an element of resistance and there are moments of conversion in the process of dialogue. When one shatters one's own little system and recognizes another person, one becomes more truly a person oneself. Maturation includes conversion away from self-centredness to the wider reality of life and people. Dialogue may contain words addressed to us summoning us to such a conversion. Our free response to these summons will be consitutive of who we are. This conversion has nothing to do with proselytization. And every one engaged in dialogue experiences conversion. Dialogue has a consitutive role and continues throughout man's life. Wisdom (sophia, Jnana) is achieved only in the process by which men create their spiritual cultures.

DIALOGUE AND EXPERIENCE :

As the basis for his feeling, judging and acting, every one appeals to his own experience as the last resort. But men have made this appeal to experience as basis for their divergent religious and philosophical creeds and persuasions. Under this anomalous appeal there lurk different theories about the essence of experience itself. And it seems to be obvious that in every appeal to experience there is a principle of selection at work, that is, a principle by which one decides what can and cannot count for experience as the basis of human feeling, judging and acting. This of course gives rise to the problems of evaluating these different theories of experience.

We need therefore an integral theory of experience which will acknowledge the validity of all the dimensions of experience, not looking at experience as a passive reception by a theoretical observer of what is externally given, nor making the linguistic expression of experience so essential as to claim that the full content of experience can be discovered by an analysis of the language itself by the tools of symbolic logic or mathematical physics. Experience transcends expression and hence experience cannot be judged adequately by a linguistic analysis. It can be judged only by a return to experience itself and this experiential encounter may subsequently correct verbal expression. In general, we must reject any theory of experience which will decide beforehand what kind of thing experiene must contain and what it should not.

Some would assert that experince is one of those basic realities which defines itself and needs no other criterion than itself. As long as experience is present, they say, no question about it arises. Questions about an experience arise when it has yielded its place to critical self-consciousness and reflection. Experience, we may say, is primary awareness. Atma-buddhi-prakasam (Svet. up. VI; 18). Sadvidya is contact with reality, and philosophy in India starts with the first appearence of the word and meaning of Sat. And it culminates in the experience of the ultimate Reality, Brahmavidya, Brahman Sakshatkara, Brahma Sarsa, Brahmā Anubhava. To some philosophers the ultimate experience would be that experience in which not only the object but also the subject is lost.

But we must not neglect the social nature of experience which would correct the subjectivizing tendency. Our social nature tends to consider as trustworthy only those experiences which we somehow test, modify and enrich in sharing them with others. More so, since the connection between repeated experiences cumulatively discloses more and more of the experienced thing. This offers us occasions of critical comparison. Hence we always appeal to those who have experience. This solidly based doctrine that experience is social in character means that we do not begin with a subjective private experience on the one hand and an objective external world on the other.

EXPERIENCE AND MEANING:

The contents and dimensions of experience are the contents and dimensions of meaning. The correct theory of experience therefore sees these contents and dimensions of meaning as conditions in the things themselves, and as the foundation for the experience which can be distinguished as political, moral, aesthetic, religious and so on. The dimensions of meaning are not mere mental constructs in the things we experience, as scientism contends.

Nihilism is the contention that being has no meaning. Existential vacuum and collective mass neurosis have resulted from this nihilism. But each man is summoned to answer to life and to his own life. And he can respond to life only by being responsible. Thus responsibleness is the very essence of human existence, (eg. Victor E. Frankle: Man's Search for Meaning). There is meaning, sense, or purpose only in that to which man can say "Yes, so be it, Amen, Aum." Man finds this free assent possible where he is in agreement or harmony with his world and his world with him and when he is identical with himself in this mutual agreement. Such a harmony is expressed by the word peace, santi, shalam. Hence the santipath, AUM santi.

Logos is a Greek word that denotes "meaning," "artha," "porul", sense, values. The meaning of human life is "something or some one to live for, something or some one to die for." Man has come to understand that he is not so much pushed by drives as pulled by values. Being pulled by values postulates his freedom and decision.

Meaning is more than agreement with the manifest purpose. It is also participative concordance (agreement in sharing) with the

fathomless Ground-of-Meaning. This primordial agreement is what makes meaning meaningful. But even this most primordial agreement does not simply happen and it is not received as something assigned fatefully by the Ground-of-Meaning. Again meaning is not an emergence from existence. Meaning must give itself or be given to him. It must confront his existence demanding, challenging. Nonetheless meaning does not exist independently of man's active experience. The questioner about meaning must ultimately himself give the answer. Thus experience of meaning is also the position of meaning in a unity of acceptance and establishment, knowledge and decision for. In a word, meaning is actively co-produced. The Omkara or Sadakkhya may as well be its symbol. (eg. Jorg Splett: Sacramentum Mundi Vol. IV pp 3-9).

In this light and perspective Religion is defined non-theologically in terms of human dynamics, as the basic motivational, expressive and cognitive structure by which we find and articulate meaning to human life as a whole. That is: religion has to do with convictions and activities that give life meaning or make life a meaningful enterprise. Religious conceptions should explain the meaning of life; religious celebrations should give this apprehension of life's meaning an expressive form in self-articulation; religious ethics should provide a way of life in consonance with this meaning.

MAN'S BECOMING AND THE SUPERNATURAL:

The process of man's coming to be who he is involves not only the world of men but also the self-communication of God. In Maurice Blondel's vision of human life as elaborated in his monumental work, " L'Action ", wherever men are, God is supernaturally present to them in the process of their humanization. Grace, therefore, is understood as the presence of God to man becoming himself and creating history. For man is summoned to create himself through dialogue and this dialogue includes a very special word, the Word of God. The Logos or Meaning of life available in humnn dialogue resounding in conscience, enlightening every man and ever coming to him is not man's creation. It is uttered by men but transcends them. It stands over against them and judges them. It transcends also the age, judges time and history from eternity. It is also a gratuitous gift granted by Infinite Freedom and effecting in

man his own freedom. The Spirit of God is the Creator of freedom by which man becomes a person. Blondel's perspective, though it confronted the official teaching of the theological schools of his time, has been widely adopted in Catholic theology during the past three quarters of our century, and it influenced the composition of the Conciliar documents of Vatican II. For under the influence of Blondel the Belgian philosopher Joseph Marechal re-read St. Thomas Aquinas and reinterpreted the intentionality of knowledge. And his followers applied the German epistemology.

Man is spirit in the world. In his act of knowing, man does not walk out of himself towards the object. Knowing is the being present-to-himself of the knower. The concept of the object is a determination of the knower within himself. Indian logic disputes whether this knowledge is a quality of the soul or an action of the soul etc. Abstraction is the liberation of the idea of the object from the limitations of the sense data and the act of universalizing that idea so that it can be found in an indefinite number of individual objects. But we grasp and universalize a potential object of knowledge, as limited and hence capable of repetition in an infinite number of singulars. This potential object of knowledge forms the horizon. Karl Rahner and his school affirm that man's pre-apprehension of an absolute horizon is in reality a pre-apprehension of absolute Being (Brahman). In every judgement a universal esse is simultaneously grasped in a pre-apprehension. This absolute is indescribable (anirvacaniya) because it is non-objectivated as in a region beyond all categories, not even grasped by reflection. Hence implicit in any act of knowledge is a special self-experience and a special orientation towards reality.

Hence these Catholic theologians now say that the divine message which the Church preaches, after all, only makes explicit as thematized knowledge, the divine self-communication that is gratuitously offered in human life itself and that, when accepted, is implicitly co-known and co-intended in the knowledge of the finite world.

While, therefore, Blondel went as far as to say that man is open to the supernatural in the ultimate option by which he transcends the finite and opens himself to the Infinite, Catholic theologians to-day go farther and declare that man opens himself to the supernatural also in the many necessary and sometimes painful choices by which

he perseveres in the movement towards humanization and spiritual cultures. Prayer, contemplation and mystic experience are no more to be a looking away from, but rather of looking very deeply at what happens in ordinary life in order to discern in secular experience the redemptive reality of God. In Vedantic terminology, it would be equivalent to saying that the paramartata satta is not attained by suppressing the vyavaharata but by looking for and reaching the depths of the vyavaharata satta.

We have to reinterpret the traditional doctrines of God and of the supernatural. Certain attempts have already been made. Some regard God as a reality beyond being i.e. a metametaphysical reality and develop a language for speaking about God derived from an analysis of human knowing and the formation of consciousness by a process of human dialogue as we have pointed out above. Others reinterpret the doctrine of God and of the supernatural from a new analysis of human experience and of the meaning of life. Others, as we have seen above, in line with the transcendental philosophy, see God present in the presuppositions of man's knowledge of the world. The new focus enables us to speak about the Gospel in a language drawn from contemporary experience and expresses the meaning rediscovered. The reinterpretation of God and of Religion in the light of this new focus enables us to speak about God and Religion in ordinary secular language. God is redemptively present in human life. God is involved in man's coming to be. Men have come to be who they are through a process of dialogue and sharing in which God is redemptively involved. Since God's Word is constitutive of who we are as men, God has entered into the definition of man.

Traditional Western philosophy with its static view of reality did not provide theologians with concepts that could enable them to speak of God's immanence, though it was never foreign to Christian faith. East-West Dialogue is evolving categories which enable theologians to speak about God without making the divine reality extrinsic to man.

God is never simply an object of man's knowledge. "By what would one know the knower?", the Upanishadic Rishi asked. The answer is "not by knowing the knower, but by being the knower". That is, experience is at the same time a self-awareness, Atmabodha,

Atmavidya. God's presence to human life is He as He is in Himself. This presence is gratuitous self-communication, atma-buddhi-prasada. Not by much learning, not by ascetic practices can He be attained; "He can be attained only by him whom He chooses," says the Katha Upanishad (II v 23; cfr also Mund. Up. 3.2.3.). Since God has entered the definition of man, every statement about God will be in terms of man's becoming. Even the fundamental dictum that "God exists" means that "man is alive by a principle that transcends him, over which he has no power, which summons him to surpass himself and free him to be creative" (Man Becoming by Gregory Baum p 185). God is understood as the uncreated depth dimension of human life and the transcendent mystery present in history.

To say "God is personal" means that man's relationship to the deepest dimension of his life is inter-personal. It is not a relation to a blind life-force or a necessary, ever-expanding dynamism, but to a mystery of freely chosen self-disclosure which can only be spoken of in personal terms.

In this way practically all the doctrines of Christianity are being reinterpreted according to the new focus so that they acquire newer depths of meaning, cohering together organically and keeping in line with tradition. Hence in this post-secularization age religion in the West rises again to a newer life.

Hinduism too, like Christianity, whether some recognize it or not, is going through a process of unprecedented change and reconstruction in its own way.

Cultured Hindus, like their counterparts in Christianity, are sensitive to attacks against certtain attitudes they hold from hoary traditions. Yet several attempts are made to re-state certain doctrines not only with a view to vindicate their reasonableness as philosophic explanations of the nature of the world but also to prove that they do not necessarily produce a frame of mind and life-outlook such as would prevent active and purposive participation in world process. The efforts at re-statement also aim at giving a conscious and deliberate reorientation of the message of the Vedanta to new ends such as the modern world demands of a new India, and accommodating the ancient doctrine to the needs of the new world.

Such re-interpretation is not uncommon. Sri Aurobindo Ghose's synthetic philosophy tries to bring together the best of the classical darsanas adequate to provide an attitude of life and towards life in accord with conditions of progress and achievement to enable the Hindu "to inherit the future without denying the past." Embrace existence as an act of God's universal play; all that is emanates from His Ananda, has its being in His Ananda and enters into His Ananda; knowing this you can live in the active relative world the life divine. Appayya Diskshitar's Sarva Mukti, the universal salvation, is effected only when every historical individual gains his end. Sarvodaya is to be intergrated to this religious ideal. Thinkers see a desperate need in India for a new social philosophy, a new message of hope, which will demand a fearlessness in thought and for freedom from all tyranny, even the tyranny of texts.

Professor A. R. Wadia (Contemporary Indian phily. p. 362) asks for a vision of truth which prompts man to self-culture and social service. Correcting even Gandhiji's attitudes to the industrialization he remarks: "More than others, a great Karma Yogin like Gandhiji should realize the full significance of homo faber, man as tool-maker. He is essentially an inventive genius and it would be wrong to put any artificial limits to his inventiveness. If the industrialization of the West is really wicked and soulless, it will not do for India to turn her back upon it, but she must spiritualize it and this will be the test of her spirituality." (A. R. Wadia: Presidential address at VI session of the Indian Philosophical Congress pp. 25 ff). He calls for a philosophy of objective reality that will assure us that the material world is real, that what is called matter is indeed pregnant with spirit (Aryan Path III p. 675), that will respect people's individualities as real, and that will urge us to accept life as meaningful to man, to conceive it in terms of a struggle, a moral struggle eschewing all violent methods.

We see two characteristic trends of Indian philosophy as it takes shape today: one is to hold fast to the tradition of its own past; and the other is to graft on to the tradition the activism of the occident. While veering by instinct towards an advaitic interpretation of the universe, modern Hindu thought at the same time pulsates with a new urge to activism, a drive towards active social service. Several comparative studies of Vedanta and Western Existentialism have

appeared recently. A dialogue between Advaita and Existentialism is to be seen in "The Personalistic Existentialism of Berdyaev" by Dr. Balasubramanian and Published by the Centre of Advanced study in Philosophy of the Madras University. When we know that Existentialism sees intentionality in the very primordial human consciousness, we can surmise perhaps future shifts in the Advaitic doctrine which would give greater reality to the world, discovering, as we have said, the paramartata satta at the very depths of the vyavaharata satta.

Such reinterpretations will certainly give new strength to the various systems of Hindu thought and Hinduism, like Christian will find assured place in the future.